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ABSTRACT

The history of the liberal arts college from its origins in the medieval universities of Western Europe and England is traced, and the present changes in the liberal arts colleges in the United States are considered. In France and Germany, instruction in the liberal arts became the responsibility of classical secondary schools as the universities concentrated exclusively on advanced studies. In England, however, where strong advanced faculties in theology, law, and medicine were not as fully developed, the emphasis was on the general cultural work of the arts faculty, and the residential college seems to have reached the peak of influence when the first North American colonial colleges were being established. The colonial colleges took the English pattern for a model. As late as the last quarter of the eighteenth century, two-thirds of the students enrolled in higher education in the United States were in liberal arts programs and most of them were in free-standing liberal arts colleges. Most U.S. universities developed an amalgam between undergraduate liberal arts education and advanced professional study. It is suggested that the free-standing liberal arts college might have found renewed strength if either instruction in arts had been separated from the work of the university, or the arts curriculum had been maintained intact while adding a separate graduate unit to the university. In the 1970s, the free-standing liberal arts colleges seem to be facing a particularly critical point in their history. Some of the colleges have responded to pressures to justify their existence by opting for changed missions and expanded roles. Studies underway at the University of Denver have identified five categories of liberal arts colleges. (SW)

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THE AMERICAN UNDERGRADUATE ARTS COLLEGE: A STUDY OF THE MAJOR THEMES INFORMING ITS DEVELOPMENT AND A PROGNOSIS FOR ITS FUTURE

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The American Undergraduate Arts College: a Study of the Major Themes Informing its Development and a Prognosis for its Future

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The subject of this paper is that class of American postsecondary educational institutions commonly identified as liberal arts colleges. More specifically, the paper focuses on that segment which may be described as free-standing (unaffiliated with a university) baccalaureate-degree-granting colleges. The degree normally conferred by these institutions is the Bachelor of Arts, although the Bachelor of Science is frequently found as well -- and there seem to be infinite variations on both. The colleges generally include the term "liberal arts" in their descriptions and emphasize thereby that they seek to maintain a general arts orientation rather than to provide more specialized professional and vocational sequences.

During much of the history of American higher education, these institutions have constituted the major form of postsecondary education. A French educator explaining American higher education in 1896 found, excluding persons enrolled in preparatory (non-collegiate level) departments, nearly two-thirds of the students enrolled in arts colleges, barely 4 percent in "graduate departments" and the remainder in professional and other schools.[1] His observations were being reported 260 years after the founding of Harvard and twenty years after the establishment of Johns Hopkins University and at a time when educational leaders were predicting that the undergraduate arts college had run its course. These institutions continued, nonetheless, well into the twentieth century to play a dominant role in the American postsecondary enterprise.

If the same educator were alive eighty-five years later and were explaining American higher education in 1981, he would be dealing with a strikingly different structure in which there appear to be three major types of institutions:

(1) the community college with its ever-expanding offerings and constituting a bridge between secondary and postsecondary education; (2) the wide-ranging comprehensive college and university systems overlapping the work of the community college in many ways and providing postsecondary education in virtually any subject required or requested and granting an incredible range of diplomas, certificates and degrees from associate to master's level; (3) the university with undergraduate departments oriented toward preparation for advanced study and emphasizing graduate work and research. In addition, there are many kinds of professional schools and institutes, but these involve a small portion of the postsecondary enrollment.

In the closing decades of the twentieth century, the free-standing baccalaureate-degree-granting colleges do not seem to fit comfortably with any of the other categories of institutions. They occupy a small portion of the total universe of postsecondary education, and it appears that this portion is rapidly decreasing. In a listing based on data for 1970, the Carnegie Commission on Higher Education identified 721 institutions as liberal arts colleges. This group constituted 25 percent of all postsecondary institutions at that time and enrolled approximately 8 percent of the students in postsecondary education.[2] In late 1976, a new listing, based on data for 1976, identified only 583 institutions as liberal arts colleges, or 138 fewer than six years previously. In the new listing the colleges constituted 19 percent of all postsecondary institutions and enrolled approximately 5 percent of the students.[3] Many of the "lost" institutions had been reclassified as "comprehensive colleges/universities." Some had ceased operation or merged with other institutions.

Under the circumstances, the question inevitably arises: Is there any longer a place for the single-purpose liberal arts college? To certain observers, it is only a matter of time until, like the dinosaur, the free-standing liberal arts college passes from the scene -- although dinosaurs did manage to dominate the earth for 130 million years, a fairly long time. To others, the arts college

is an endangered species and needs to be preserved in the face of forces bent on its destruction. To some, the liberal arts college is not disappearing, but it is being transformed, and the question is how much of its tradition will it be able to preserve. However viewed, the free-standing college provides a study in persistence and change, adaptation and transformation. If change is the order, what is the change from and into what? If persistence is the order, what is it that persists in the midst of the change?

It has been claimed that the liberal arts college is a unique and peculiarly American institution.[4] One historian of American higher education refers to the education provided in such a college as one of the oldest traditions of American higher education, "a tradition so fundamental, so all-encompassing that to call it merely a tradition is to undervalue it."[5] The free-standing liberal arts college may be unique in the sense that it has persisted in a form that has all but disappeared in other Western countries, but it is not unique in the sense of being a new creation. Its basic form is rooted in the institutions of fifteenth and sixteenth century Western Europe and England, and those had already undergone an evolution.

The early universities of Europe were professional institutions providing training in theology, law and medicine. In the fourth century, Cassiodorus had established the principle that students of theology should have preparation in the liberal arts, and when later the universities emerged the arts faculty constituted the preparatory department for the advanced studies. The first colleges, however, were not primarily for arts students but were created to provide shelter for advanced scholars assembled at sites of the great European universities. Later they incorporated the arts students and became basic units in the university structure in France, Germany and England.

Among the universities of Western Europe, Paris "must be regarded as the home of the university collegiate system in the sense that academic colleges of a kind arose there earlier than anywhere else."[6] A review of the rise and decline

of the French colleges identifies certain of the general themes that inform the development of the American colleges.

In the Hospital of the Blessed Mary of Paris, the Hôtel-Dieu, near the emerging Cathedral of Nôtre Dame de Paris, a single room had been set aside for sheltering certain "poor clerks." In 1180, one Jocius de Londinnis purchased the room and endowed it for the perpetual support of eighteen poor clerks, and thus was created the Collège des Dix-Huit.[7] Other establishments followed, and during the medieval period Paris attracted some sixty or seventy colleges. The endowment provided by Robert de Sorbon, chaplain to Louis IX, advanced the endowed hospice to another level, when in 1257 or 1258, some eighty years after the founding of the Collège des Dix-Huit, he provided funds not only for rooms but for the support of certain advanced students in theology. Initially enrolling sixteen students, the membership later was increased to thirty-six.

Control of the college established by Robert was vested in Governors, whose members were external to the college and were appointed by the foundations. The Governors included the archdeacon and chancellor of Paris, the doctors of theology the deans and the faculties of law and medicine, and the rector and proctors of the university. The day-to-day operation of the college remained in the hands of the resident officers, but the Governors controlled the appointment of the headmaster, the filling of vacant fellowships, and the management of the property.[8] In this important respect, the colleges of Paris differed significantly from those of Oxford and Cambridge; the English colleges were autonomous, self-governing foundations.

The colleges in Paris were established to provide maintenance and support for those who could not otherwise afford to remain at the university. In the early 1300s, the Collège d'Harcourt, however, began to admit paying scholars. Other colleges followed suit, and the role of the collegiate establishment was broadened to include more services.[9]

Early on, the master and/or his assistants in a college provided tutorial

help for the scholars. With the advent of paying members, the services increased. At Navarre, from the beginning, the master was required "diligently to hear the lessons of the Scholars studying in the Faculty of Arts and faithfully to instruct them alike in life and in doctrine."[10] The limited lectures and reviews provided to supplement the teaching in the university schools gradually expanded, and the colleges were able to provide full-time employment for the more qualified regent masters. By the fifteenth century, the colleges were competing with the schools of the university, and at Paris the regent masters were complaining in 1445 that "almost the full university resides in the colleges."[11] By 1457 the University was requiring residence in colleges or hospices for all scholars.

Teaching responsibilities at Paris were not equally distributed among the colleges, and a two-tier system soon developed, in which the larger and better endowed collegiate establishments played the major role, while the smaller and less well endowed colleges sent their members to lectures in the larger institutions. Within this structure the colleges maintained two functions, the administration of the facilities and the provision of instruction. The teaching function was identified by the term exercice, and those colleges which provided the complete range of instruction in the arts were referred to as the collèges de plein exercice. Among the forty-four secular colleges and the nine maintained by religious communities in the 1560s, ten were identified as collèges de plein exercice.[12]

The unrest that characterized the sixteenth century in Europe spilled over into the University, and decline had begun. By the end of the sixteenth century, although forty-three of the colleges still remained, not one of them was carrying on the work for which it had been originally intended, with lecture rooms "converted into stables where soldiery lodged their horses or in which farm animals were kept."[13] Efforts were made to revive the university by Henry IV, and the Code of 1600 called for all members of the university, before

taking a degree, to swear loyalty to the king and the magistrates. In spite of all attempts at reform, however, the history of the University through the seventeenth century is "a record of mediocre acheivement."[14]

In the meantime, the Society of Jesus, admitted to Paris under royal approval, in 1563, had opened the Collège de Clermont. Providing a full secondary education, as well as courses in theology, and open to all without fee, it was soon in competition with the University. Known for the quality of their discipline and teaching, the Jesuits virtually dominated secondary education in France until their expulsion in 1762; some of their colleges even granted degrees.

The colleges of the University of Paris were supressed with the French Revolution, and the University never again reverted to collegiate lines. In the provincial universities, the colleges had been primarily boarding houses for students, and few had developed into educational units. By the end of 1792, the colleges and universities of the Ancien Regime had to a large extent been destroyed by the abolition of their sources of income and the requirement of a civil oath for all involved. On March 8, 1793, the Convention decided "that the endowments of colleges and other establishments of public instruction, under whatever title they exist, should be confiscated; but the actual buildings of colleges and the living quarters of teachers and pupils were to be spared."[15]

With the further reorganization of the French educational system in 1802, the lycées became the successors of the colleges, but no longer were they residential higher institutions. In the tradition of preparation for the advanced faculties, however, the lycées awarded on examination as a completion certificate, the baccalauréat.

Collegiate structures were common to France, Germany and England, but the universities reflected the special characteristics of the social and political climates of their homelands.[16] In Germany, not only were universities developed at a later date than in France and England, but they were established by the specific act of civil authorities. They were founded by the territorial

governments under which "the ruler called the school into being, supplied it with buildings and, at the right time, granted the universitas certain rights such as autonomy, jurisdiction over its own members, and exemption from duties and taxes."[17] As at Paris, the doctors and masters were the principal elements, but the students in the German university were included more fully as members of the corporation; teachers and scholars enrolled in the university together, took the same oath, were similarly members and subjects of the university.[18]

Colleges and bursen developed initially as different kinds of accommodations in Germany, the colleges as houses established for the masters of limited means, and the bursen as residences for the students.[19] In time, however, the distinction between colleges and bursen became blurred, and the term "college" was used to refer not only to the houses of the masters but also to the accommodations for the students.[20] In the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries the colleges were providing the major instruction of the university.

Paulsen compares the German university of the time to a "great boarding school," where teachers and students, at least in the faculty of arts, lived together in university buildings. He notes also that universities frequently maintained a paedagogium for primary Latin students.[21] These university preparatory institutions, providing training before the students matriculated into the arts faculty, contained the germ of separation between lower and higher instruction in the liberal arts and led, at a later time, to the development of the classical high school, the gymnasium, which prepared its graduates for the higher professional studies in the university.[22]

With the Protestant Reformation of the sixteenth century, the communal life of the students and teachers in the colleges and bursen ceased as the cloister life and the celibacy of the masters began to disappear. Such bursen as persisted became the loci of preparatory work and slowly severed connection with the universities. By the end of the sixteenth century and the beginning of the seventeenth century, these units had become separate secondary institutions. The term gymnasium was being used in the sixteenth century, and the classical high schools assisted the university further to abandon its preparatory departments and turn exclusively to the higher professional studies.[23]

The colleges in France (particularly in Paris) and Germany had begun as hospices for older students and had evolved into teaching units emphasizing training in the liberal arts and preparation for advanced studies. Although many persons failed to continue academic work beyond the arts sequence, and many did not even complete it, the program in liberal studies was not intended to be a terminal program; it was but the first step toward professional certification, the master's and/or doctorate. In France, especially with the rise of the Jesuit colleges, the preparatory function came to be separated from the university. The separation was complete with the restructuring of French education under Napoleon, and the baccalauréat became the award at school leaving for those who passed a set of rigorous examinations. In Germany, the separation began at the time of the Protestant Reformation.

In the seventeenth century the universities were at a low in effectiveness and prestige. The Thirty Years' War (1618-1648) ravaged the country, the population was reduced to one-third, from some 30 million to less than 10 million, and Germany became a feudal territory with hundreds of small principalities.[24] Only with the establishment of the University of Halle in 1694 was a new beginning made in German university education. As Lehrfreiheit and Lernfreiheit came to characterize the mood of the new education, the university and preparatory liberal arts institutions were even more clearly separated.

In both France and Germany, political, social and religious movements provided the setting in which study in the liberal arts as preparatory to advanced work was assigned to non-university institutions and the universities became more professional in orientation. The preparatory function continued, but under separate auspices.

The process of developing colleges at Oxford and Cambridge in England was both similar and different from that at Paris. In the early years the universities owned little or no property. A student could take a room in a tavern or private house in the village. If he were wealthy enough, and few

were, he could rent an entire house for himself and his group. Or, he could go to a hall or hostel. Students found that by living in groups and sharing costs, they were able to secure quarters at lower rates, buy food cheaper and through effecting organization better protect themselves against the town. Graduates saw possibilities of income in managing residential halls, and some rented quarters which they developed into lodgings for others. Initially, there was no university supervision of the quarters, until, to counteract increasing tendencies toward exploitation, the university required the principal of a hall to register and to renew his license annually. He was asked also to post security and to maintain residence in the house. By 1432 all scholars were required to dwell in a hall or college.[25]

Walter de Merton's grant in 1263 set the pattern for English colleges, similar to those of Paris in that the grant provided for the shelter and maintenance of advanced students, different in that the scholars for whom he provided the endowment" were not pensioners administered by others, but corporate land owners."[26] As a private corporation, the college fellows owned and controlled the endowment of the college. With this grant a college had a measure of independence that allowed it to shape its own existence, and subsequent English foundations developed in ways quite different from the colleges of Paris and the colleges and bursen of Germany. (While Merton is credited as being the first of the Oxford colleges, Sir John de Baliol, regent of Scotland had under duress in 1260 made all-too-modest provisions for the maintenance of poor scholars at Oxford, and it was only in 1282, through the efforts of his widow that the college could be established.) In every college founded before 1500, with the exception of King's Hall at Cambridge, the fellows of the college received by statute the right of electing the warden, master, president or provost -- whatever the title of the headmaster--and confirmation by an outside authority such as a bishop or chancellor was pro forma.

Paris had opened the doors of the colleges to a larger constituency with

the action of the College d'Harcourt to admit paying scholars. At Oxford, changes began with the establishment of New College in 1379, a foundation impressive not only in terms of the number of fellowships and in the scale of the buildings, but also in the provision of William of Wykeham that a sizeable undergraduate element should be included as a permanent part of the collegiate community.[27] By the late fourteenth century, the colleges were becoming mixed communities of graduates and undergraduates. In 1458, Bishop Waynefelte, the father of Magdalen College at Oxford, provided that twenty sons of "noble and powerful personages, being friends of such college" should be admitted at their own expense.[28] The admission of fee-paying students opened even wider the doors of the colleges, and much of the reason for the existence of the halls disappeared. In the middle of the fifteenth century there were sixty-nine halls at Oxford; by 1552 only eight remained.[29]

The colleges were also beginning to offer instruction to supplement the university lectures. Earlier, the hall lectures had been delivered by the principals and their graduate assistants, but as the colleges developed, the foundations included tutorial staff that the halls could not provide. Then, college lectureships were established, at first at Magdalen in 1479-80, whereby fellows of the college or persons from outside the college were appointed to deliver a course of lectures within the college for an agreed-upon salary. Nearly every college was providing some form of lectures by the end of the fifteenth century. During the sixteenth century the colleges became more and more self-contained teaching units, and unlike the process which developed at Paris, there were no two-tier arrangements, but each college provided its own full complement of instruction.

The next step toward collegiate autonomy was taken under Elizabeth I. The growth of Puritan strength at Oxford in the person of Thomas Cartwright, Lady Margaret Professor of Divinity, brought the possibility that a Puritan might be elected vice-chancellor. Election of the vice-chancellor was by the regent

masters, and it appeared that Cartwright might have sufficient support to win the office. The more conservative elements at Cambridge drew up a set of statutes in which the university was redefined as a society of colleges rather than as a society of regent masters. The new statutes placed the authority, influence and responsibility in the hands of the masters of the colleges and houses. Elizabeth approved the new statutes on September 25, 1570.[30] At Oxford, in 1628 another series of events led to a similar proposal for the constitution of that university that was approved by Charles I.

Thus, by the beginning of the seventeenth century, the colleges of Oxford and Cambridge had become the basic and dominant units of the university. In accommodations and caliber of instruction, the colleges had edged out the system of public instruction. The statutes approved by Elizabeth gave the colleges control of the university through the election of the vice-chancellor, and the role of the regent masters declined. Earlier, every graduate was required to remain at the university for a time to participate in the public lectures and disputations, but now only the graduates who had been elected to fellowships in their respective colleges were required to remain. In this situation, rather than giving themselves fully to the study of one of the higher faculties, the new fellows became involved increasingly in the instruction of the undergraduates. The universities were evolving into undergraduate institutions primarily dedicated to the single aim of the "virtuous education of youth."[31]

While colleges as non-degree granting and non-residential institutions developed in England apart from the two ancient universities, Oxford and Cambridge dominated the scene. Gresham College, founded in 1548, had seven professorships and eventually became a center of learning in the form of the Royal Society of London, but it never reached university status. There was King James' short-lived Chelsea College founded in 1609. Efforts were also made to found universities at Ripon (1604), Carlisle (1617), Manchester (1640) and York (1640). Durham (1649) was a university for a short time under Cromwell. The dissenters' academies

took on the character of independent colleges in the 1700s.[32]

The first attempt at the establishment of an institution in the English colonies in what was to become the United States of America was in 1619 when the Virginia Company of Old England made a grant of 10,000 acres of land for the founding of a university; it was not until 1693, some seventy-four years later that the College of William and Mary was chartered. In the meantime, the Massachusetts Bay Colony voted to establish a "school or college" in October, 1636. The school, soon named Harvard College after its first benefactor, opened in July or August 1638, only to close a year later. Reopened in 1640, it survived to become the complex Harvard University of today.

With the chartering of the College of William and Mary in 1693, the English colonies had two institutions of higher learning. In the next three-quarters of a century, these two colleges, Harvard and William and Mary, were joined by seven others, scattered among the settlements along the Eastern seaboard. In addition, a Presbyterian academy, relocated from Pennsylvania in 1765, and later to become the University of Delaware, was in existence in Delaware. What became years later St. John's College was founded as King Williams School, of less than collegiate level, at Annapolis, Maryland in 1696. A Jesuit College had been established in Quebec in 1633 but did not achieve more than secondary status until 1660.

It is not surprising that the North American colonial institutions followed English patterns; it would have been surprising if they had not. Yet, they also took on their own characteristics. The first American college was founded by a joint stock company, the "Governor and Company of the Massachusetts Bay in New England. This group had secured control of an earlier company and under a charter which, "by chance or design" did not require the stockholders to meet in any particular place, elected to emigrate to New England.[33] Under the charter a governor, deputy governor, and various assistants to be elected by the stockholders from among the freemen had the responsibility for the maintenance of the colony, subject to meetings of the stockholder,, the

General Court. Through a series of actions, the trading company became, in effect, a commonwealth. It was the General Court, the meeting of the stockholders, that on October 28, 1636 passed the Act leading to the establishment of what became Harvard College. Lacking the concentration of masters and scholars that provided the foundations for the first universities in Europe and England, the company acted more in the tradition of the businessmen who established Gresham College (1548) and other institutions which in England were non-degree-granting and specialized in nature.

Twelve years after its opening (and fourteen years after the Act of Foundation), the second head of the institution, Henry Dunster, attempted to recreate in Cambridge the structure of the English university-affiliated college. The Charter of 1650 identified the college as "a Corporation consisting of seven persons . . . a President, five Fellows, and a Treasurer or Busar" who were empowered, with the counsel and consent of the Overseers, "at any time or times to elect a new President, Fellows, or Treasurer," and were given "in name and fact" the right "to be one body politic and corporate in law to all intents and purposes, and . . . have perpetual succession, and shall be called by the name of President and Fellows of Harvard College . . . ."[34]

The Corporation was given broad powers, and if it could have performed in accordance with the provisions would have created an independent English style college. In spite of the intent, the establishment did not have the endowment, the ready supply of persons who would or could remain as resident Fellows, nor the supply of scholars to support the program. Still, although the structure of the endowed English college could not be replicated, the residential character, the nature of the curriculum, the control over student life, placed the new institution within the tradition of much of the ancient liberal arts preparatory schools.

In similar manner, the second American college attempted to reproduce the ancient patterns. The charter of the College of William and Mary, granted in 1693, provided "that the President and Masters, or Professors, of the said College,

shall be a Body politic and incorporate, in Deed and Name; and that by the Name of the President, and Masters, or Professors, of the College of William and Mary, in Virginia, they shall have perpetual Succession . . . ."[35] The charter also created Visitors and Governors with "a continual Succession." For a time the President and Masters did act as an independent body and attained a degree of autonomy not reached by the other colonial colleges. At length, however, the Visitors gained broad powers and served as the non-resident board of control.

The President and Fellows of Yale College constituted the only board for that institution. The charter granted the College of New Jersey (Princeton) in 1746 created a single board, the Trustees of the College. The single governing board became the rule for institutions subsequently established, and the decision of the Supreme Court of the United States in the Dartmouth College case in 1819 identified the board as the corporate authority of a college and established in law its independence.

The identification of a lay board as responsible for the maintenance and operation of a college contributed in significant ways to the structures that subsequently developed in the United States. The master and fellows of the English colleges were self-governing property owners. The colleges of Germany had been identified from an early date with the university as the corporation and became parts of the college-university maintained by the prince or ruler of the state. The French colleges, although governed by civil, clerical and university officials separate from the membership of the college, were still answerable through the faculty/nations to the university as a whole. In the United States the independent lay board gave remarkable autonomy to the individual institutions.

What strikes one about these early higher educational institutions in colonial North America is: (a) they were created as independent foundations, located in widely scattered geographical places, with no direct day-to-day contact with one another, unlike the earlier European colleges that were situated within

the larger university community in the town or city; (b) they were established by official action of the state, governor, or crown, and yet were independent of the government and controlled by a board of lay persons -- citizens, magistrates clergy -- who were neither faculty nor students and who maintained only an alliance of sorts with the authorizing government; (c) unlike the French and English institutions, they were established de novo and could not identify with any earlier assemblage of scholars and masters; (d) they were complete units in that they offered a total, even if limited, curriculum; (e) while in no way related to any university structure, they began as degree-granting institutions; (f) instruction was basically in the liberal arts, and initially there was nothing resembling the higher faculties of theology, law or medicine.

During the colonial period the four-year free-standing college was the form of higher education, and the liberal arts curriculum was the curriculum. While King's (Columbia) announced at its founding a more ambitious intent -- courses in surveying, navigation, geography, history and natural philosophy, "the Knowledge... of Everything useful for the Comfort, the Convenience and the Elegance of Life ..."[36] the curriculum soon dropped into the traditional liberal arts sequences, although Kings in 1767 did introduce a medical department of sorts. Philadelphia (University of Pennsylvania) was no less ambitious in its announced plans for instruction in the classics, mathematics, physics, biology, botany, modern literature and history, but it remained small in enrollment in its early years and provided a curriculum limited in scope, although it also introduced a medical course in 1765.

The four-year arts curriculum and the baccalaureate degree dominated the American "system" from 1640 into the 1800s, well over 200 years. In the first half of the nineteenth century hundreds of local colleges were created. By 1851, some were referring to America as "a land of colleges." Indeed, it appeared that no community was complete without its college. Donald Tewksbury's oft-quoted study reports that some 516 colleges were established in sixteen

states before 1860. In Boorstin's view, to Americans, a college "was of a piece with the community emphasis which already distinguished our civilization."[37] As the population moved West, tiny communities planted here and there almost inevitably took the title of city -- often more in expectation of the future than in reflection of the actual status of the community -- and an important way of proving that a new settlement would soon be a great city was "to provide it as quickly as possible with all of the metropolitan hallmarks, which included not only a newspaper and a hotel, but an institution of higher learning."[38]

As a community-established and community-oriented institution, a college would be under some pressure to offer courses considered important to the community. The tradition of the liberal arts, American version, however, was strong; president and faculty were products of the tradition, and a community would want a "real" college -- which meant one that was not far off the tried and tested model, whatever variations might be added. Efforts made to reform the old-time college seemed more in the way of expanding horizontally by adding applied courses of various types -- echoing in the 1800s the proud intent of King's College in 1754. Then a new note was added when George Ticknor returned from his German sojourn to become Smith Professor of French and Spanish Languages at Harvard in 1819.

George Ticknor, Edward Everett, Joseph Cogswell and George Bancroft were at Göttingen from 1815 to 1820. Ticknor and Everett who were the first to study there, arrived in 1815 and found the German university an exciting change from the American college. Subsequently, Ticknor attempted to transplant some of the practices to the American college. In Germany, the preparatory arts sequence had become the faculty of philosophy, and lectures and research were the major activities of the university. In trying to change Harvard College, which was still providing essentially the liberal arts preparatory studies, into something more like the German university, he was mixing two forms which even in the medieval university had been separate and in Germany of the eighteenth century would never have been combined. He accomplished little in a direct way at Harvard, except

to give his own teaching area a type of departmental status, but in significant ways he gave impetus to the reappraisal in higher education then stirring college circles.

The report prepared by a committee of the Yale Corporation in 1828 addressed the efforts at reappraisal, and it has been praised and condemned. It has been referred to as "probably the most influential publication in the whole history of American higher education between the Revolution and the Civil War," and as a classic restatement of the place of liberal education.[39] It has also been characterized as a most reactionary document, and to Frederick Rudolph it is the document that stopped some of the most exciting possibilities for reform in higher education in the early nineteenth century; indeed, "the reformers were so successfully routed that for almost fifty years the American college was necessarily put beyond the sympathy and understanding of the American people," and instead, "stagnation rather than dynamism became the order of the day."[40]

Both estimates are probably overstated. Still, the report seems to have marked a turning point in American education -- in ways that may not have been fully apparent in 1828, or to some writers of the more recent past. The new nation was developing. Eli Whitney had invented the cotton gin in 1791; in 1791 the United States raised 2,000,000 pounds of cotton, but by 1801 productivity had increased to 48,000,000 pounds. By 1805 the production was at 73,000,000 pounds, and five years later reached 89,000,000 pounds. Whitney had also developed a means for mass producing muskets during the War of 1812, and the idea of the assembly line was ushered in. Samuel Slater was laying the foundation of the textile industry in New England. The frontier was opening, and the Alleghenies were no longer an effective barrier to the westward movement. By 1790 there were some 170,000 people in the western lands, and by 1793 there were three established newspapers west of the Alleghenies. Jefferson had completed the Louisiana Purchase in 1803, Florida was pruchased from Spain in 1819, and Texas was annexed in 1845. Andrew Jackson had received a larger electoral vote in 1824, but John

Quincy Adams was elected in the House of Representatives; four years later Jackson entered the White House on a wave of popular enthusiasm, on the principle that government was a creature of the majority will and that the common man was adequate to perform all political duties. It was high time to examine the place of the college in American society.

In rendering its judgment on the place of the college in American society, the Yale Report concentrated upon one facet, the role of a liberal arts college--in particular, upon the role of Yale College. Admittedly the Report engages also in its share of sweeping statements about colleges in general and about the "collegiate course," but repeatedly the references are brought back to "this college." And "this college," with due recognition that it exists in the nineteenth and not the fifteenth century, is defined in terms that place it well within the tradition of the medieval institutions of liberal education that were designed to prepare students for the higher, the "superior" faculties. The object of this college "is to lay the foundation of a superior education."[41] The college is not designed to include professional subjects; the object is not to "teach that which is peculiar to any one of the professions," but rather it is to "lay the foundation which is common to them all." Indeed, there are "separate schools for medicine, law, and theology, connected with the college, as well as in various parts of the country; which are open for the reception of all who are prepared to enter upon the appropriate studies of their several professions."[42] One suspects that the reference to the ancient advanced faculties of medicine, law and theology is not accidental.

With respect to the applied fields, the Report states that "our course of instruction is not intended to complete an education, in theological, medical, or legal education; neither does it include all the minute details of mercantile, mechanical, or agricultural concerns, "because these latter occupations "can never be effectually learned except in the very circumstances in which they are to be practiced."[43] Train the merchant in the counting room, the mechanic in

his workshop, and the farmer in his field.

Nor, can the college throw open its doors to all who might wish to enter. While there are some who would argue "that education ought to be so modified, and varied, as to adapt it to the exigencies of the country, and the prospects of different individuals," such is not the role of Yale College. Education should, indeed, be made accessible to a wider portion of society, but the more popular education is properly the role of "commercial high-schools, gymnasia, lycea, agricultural seminaries," and it is not right to expect that "every college shall become a high-school, gymnasium, lyceum, and academy . . . . The college has its appropriate object and they have theirs. . . ."[44]

Yale presents its case at a period of time when the conception of the college as a limited, preparatory liberal arts institution is under attack. In its own way, Yale calls the academic community back to an older agenda. The European universities had assigned the preparatory curriculum to the secondary level of education. Yale argues that the task is still that of the collegiate institution. In the years to come American higher educational institutions would resurrect the debate again and again, only the form it would take would be whether (or how much) general education is properly a part of collegiate (postsecondary) education. In a country where educational opportunities are relatively more open than in Europe the idea that a special track be created within the secondary school for those who go on to higher education, the "superior faculties" of the medieval university, has never gained wide acceptance. The American system has never been willing an early distinction between those who continue into the higher studies and those who terminate their work in secondary school or move aside into special technical and applied occupational schools.

It is fruitless to argue whether the United States should have taken a different route or should have developed the system it has; the fact is that with the growth of a largely undifferentiated secondary schooling, the role of the

free-standing liberal arts college became an ambiguous one, partly secondary and partly higher in nature. Friedrich Paulsen, writing in 1906 identified the tension:

> In America . . . between the school proper and the university proper--the graduate school --there has been inserted an intermediate grade, the college. The four years spent at college . . . answer, therefore, to the last years at school and the first years of the university with us. And the methods and customs correspond to the dual nature of the college; they are no longer entirely those of the school and not entirely those of the university.[45]

He was incorrect in saying that the college has been "inserted" between the schools and the universities; rather the schools and the universities grew around the liberal arts college. But as the other systems grew, the place of the free-standing liberal arts college became less and less clearly defined. Yale defined the role in 1828, but it was to become increasingly difficult to maintain the 1828 position as the nineteenth century grew into the twentieth.

Subsequently Yale -- and Harvard, as well--expanded their programs, but they did so by creating coordinate and parallel institutions, Sheffield Scientific School and Lawrence Scientific School. Yale remained consistent in large part with its position of 1828, and Sheffield became the basis for the development of the "superior" or higher faculties; in 1861 it could award the first American Ph.D. In the meantime, America was developing other kinds of institutions. West Point was created as an academy for training the military in engineering (1802). The College of William and Mary had made provision for the teaching of law in 1779. Andover Seminary provided theological instruction outside of the collegiate structure. Normal schools for the training of teachers were underway in the early 1800s. Literally thousands of academies had been established in the early 1800s. In 1855 Henry Barnard catalogued 239 colleges and some 6,185 academies.[46] In one sense the academies were the forerunners of the public high schools, but in another sense they paralleled and competed with many of the liberal arts colleges. Even Yale in its report of 1828 made reference to the academies where the scheme of studies "is more various than that of the colleges," and in which one would find

taught "a little of everything." The Yale Report pleaded for one kind of education, had its influence, but educational development hardly came to a standstill because of it.

In Illinois Jonathan B. Turner was campaigning for the establishment of a new group of institutions, institutions that would do for the "industrial classes" what the liberal arts colleges were doing for the "intellectual classes." He argued against combining the roles, because he was convinced that something more was needed than adding special courses to already existing institutions.[47] He was probably right; if the free-standing liberal arts college had as its mission providing a foundation for superior education, it would not be appropriate to mix the functions.

On July 2, 1862 President Abraham Lincoln signed an "Act Donating Lands for Colleges and Mechanic Arts." The Act allowed 30,000 acres of federal land to each of the states for every congressman and senator, on the condition that the sale of the land provide an endowment for a college "where the leading objects shall be, without excluding other scientific and classical studies...to teach such branches of learning as are related to agriculture and mechanic arts...in order to promote the liberal and practical education of the industrial classes in the several pursuits and professions in life." The confounding and confusion of roles was aided and abetted by federal policy.

The fortune of Johns Hopkins provided the endowment for the first true American university, an institution opening in 1876 to offer advanced instruction and one that added the undergraduate component afterward -- albeit soon afterward. Clark (1888) and Chicago (1892) followed shortly, even as Harvard, Yale and Columbia were becoming more complex and changing from college to university through the development of specialized faculties and studies. The development of the American university was overdue; the needs of the country and the expansion of knowledge demanded it. But the role of the free-standing college became even more ambiguous. As institutions "rose above the horizon

of collegiate instruction," three routes seemed open: either strengthen the program already in being, as in Yale's Sheffield School; or develop a new program in ground prepared by the elective system and upgrade the undergraduate courses, as at Harvard; or press forward with renewed effort where an old program had become moribund, as at Columbia.

Levasseur found in 1896 that two-thirds of the students in higher education in America were enrolled in collegiate (free-standing liberal arts colleges) institutions. The college was still the "standard" form, but a number of educators were convinced that it would not be long before most of the four-year institutions would disappear from the scene. Nicholas Murray Butler of Columbia, writing in 1902, held that at least two years of the work done by the typical college was being accomplished by the preparatory schools. It was his position that with the increase in the age of admission from fifteen or sixteen to eighteen, and with the demands for professional education, the old-style college would in one or two generations cease to exist if it continued to demand four years of general education. He advocated cutting the arts course to two or three years.[48] David Starr Jordan of Stanford was saying in 1903, "Every successful college points toward the university and as far as possible strives to become such." Indeed, as it stands at the beginning of the new century, the college "is a small university; antiquated, belated, arrested, starved as the case may be ... As time goes on the college will disappear, in fact, if not in name. The best will become universities, the others will return to their place as academies."[49]

In an address given in 1900 before the National Educational Association, President William Rainey Harper of the University of Chicago referred to the future of the small college as one of the two most serious problems facing education druing the first quarter of the twentieth century. The development of the high school stands in the way of the small college, and the modern high school is becoming the "people's college" in that "much of the work formerly done by the college is now being done by the high schools." Indeed, the work

in many of the high schools "is more extensive and more thorough than was the course of study in many of the better colleges thirty or forty years ago." His prediction was that 25 percent of the colleges would survive as stronger institutions, another 25 percent would move into university type instruction, and the remainder would become either junior colleges or academies.[50]

The Association of American Universities was established in 1900. At its fifth meeting, the delegates discussed the relationship of the college and the university graduate and professional schools. Both Jordan (Stanford) and Eliot (Harvard) argued that professional work, the primary task of the university, was related to liberal education as two stages of the same institution. Liberal education could not exist by itself, professional studies made the collegiate studies meaningful, the research-minded professional should remain in contact with the collegiate tradition of liberal education. As Herbst observes, the assemblage wanted to avoid the exclusively professional-technical orientation of German higher education without the tempering influence of the liberal arts education. Jordan and Eliot spoke against drawing a sharp line dividing the college and the graduate school.[51] Their view prevailed, and as the American university developed it combined the older collegiate ideas of liberal education with the professional training in the advanced faculties.

Noah Porter, at Yale, opposed the combination. It has been suggested that Porter was skeptical of the desirability or even possibility of admitting German ideals of professional education and academic freedom to the colleges.[52] Porter was more than skeptical. A reading of the essays in The American Colleges and the American Public shows that the President of Yale was philosophically opposed to the idea; he held to the position that had been expressed by the Yale Committee half a century before: the college provides the foundation for advanced education, and the two should not be mixed. In the next to the last essay in the 1878 edition he refers to a speech of Helmholtz at Berlin in 1877, in which it is stated that without the preparation German students received in the classical gymnasium,

the German university would not be able to maintain the degree of freedom in research and study that had brought it to the position of eminence it then enjoyed. From Helmholtz's statement Porter argues that "the more freedom is allowed professors and pupils in teaching and hearing, the more imperative is the necessity that the pupils should bring minds trained to insight and discrimination, and enlarged by breadth of liberal studies."[53] From that position it is but a short step to the conclusion that "to attempt to carry into the college the forms of university life, when the conditions of its development cannot possibly exist, must be disastrous to both college and university."[54]

From the perspective of the free-standing liberal arts college, Porter was probably right. To combine the German university with the American liberal arts college was to create something that was neither, in Porter's view, a university nor a college. As porter observed, "in Germany the gymnasium is the counterpart of the American college," and to combine the ideas was the same as omitting the "instruction now given in two or three advanced classes of the gymnasium . . . in order that the student might be admitted at once to professional or scientific study." Such a proposal "in Germany would be received with derision."[55] This is, however, the direction the American university-builders took. It is not a question of whether the direction was the right or wrong direction; rather a new kind of institution was being created. The impact on the free-standing liberal arts college was, however, far reaching. As John Burgess wrote, the consequence was that one is "unable to divine what is to be ultimately the position of the Colleges which cannot become Universities and which will not be Gymnasia." He continued, "I cannot see what reason they have to exist."[56]

Even in the university, the two ideas, the emphasis on liberal education and the promotion of research have over the years maintained an uneasy peace. Countless volumes have been written to defend the connection, and perhaps in the university college something of the ideal can be nourished. But the free-standing liberal arts college found itself increasingly faced with an impossible

task. On the one hand, it stood in the tradition of the preparatory liberal arts course of the ancient universities and argued against becoming a professional school and against incorporating anything but the liberal arts. On the other hand, with the expansion of knowledge, the increase in the number and types of educational institutions and programs, the expansion of the college-going population, all of these developments made it difficult for the single-purpose liberal arts institution to remain a single-purpose liberal arts institution.

Expressions of concern over the role of the free-standing liberal arts college have continued through the eight decades of the twentieth century. In 1915, at the celebration of the one hundredth anniversary of the founding of Allegheny College a conference on the future of the American college was held, and a number of papers addressed the program, achievements, present status and probable future of the college. The editor of the series observed that, although there was general optimism regarding the future of the college, one area that aroused considerable debate grew out of descriptions of the original purpose of the American college. The differences centered around the words "cultural" and "vocational." Those who used the term "vocational" were accused of surrendering to utilitarianism, while those who emphasized "culture" were charged with working in a vacuum.[57] One paper called for a return "to the original idea of education as fundamental equipment for vocation," but hastened to say that vocation had to be interpreted in such a way "as to preserve for the college broad horizons, generous sympathies, insight into the best the world has said or done. . . ."[58] Another paper began with the assertion that modern higher education grew out of the medieval demand for thorough training in the professional careers, but that in those early institutions the arts faculty soon became the basic faculty and it was recognized that prior training in the arts was fundamental to advanced study in theology and law. Accordingly, it was not accidental that the first colleges in New England and Virginia were arts colleges.[59] The conclusion is

that the liberal arts colleges in the twentieth century perform the same function.

The general tenor of the conference is summed up in William Slocum's observation that while many have predicted the demise of the college, that it would "be crushed between the secondary school and the university; that it was a sort of unnecessary luxury and that the day was not far distant when it must close its doors, discharge its faculties," such was not the case, and to the contrary, "the leaders of the college movement are standing with independence and self-respect, unmoved, courageous, and hopeful, declaring that the college is just entering on its largest mission and its most important work."[60]

In 1932, the American Association of University Women reported on the study of 315 liberal arts colleges in nine geographical regions. The study was not limited to the free-standing college, but included the liberal arts colleges of a number of complex universities. While there is a general note of optimism in the report and it was stated that four-year liberal arts colleges had undertaken more change and experimentation in the five years preceding the study than in the twenty-five years prior to that, the conclusion to the volume observes that the college had become more of "a progressive agency in society, not merely a bearer of traditions," but that it found itself in conflict with other institutions and in its experimentation had introduced problems that will require "unusual wisdom and skill in their solution."[61] One is tempted to observe that the flurry of activity reported may have been prompted by perceived threats to the role and function of the college and rather than being an indication of the strength and health of the enterprise bespoke an underlying search for new missions.

Norman Foerster in 1938 saw the liberal college under philosophical attack and "threatened with extinction" unless it reasserted "its perennially distinctive mission."[62] Stewart Cole's volume, Liberal Education in a Democracy, appeared in 1940. While he found the status of the American liberal arts college to be educationally satisfactory, he held that it had a "fundamental weakness" in that

"it possesses no clear and commanding educational purpose to govern its policy, program, and leadership," and "if the American college is to recover its specific place in the academic world, nothing short of a thorough-going job analysis of the institution will pave the way."[63] These two volumes are picked at random from a number of similar treatments. Less significant than the specific prescriptions offered by Foerster and Cole is the fact that they and others were prompted to speak to perceived threats to the liberal arts college and to defend it.

The Handlins refer to the history of American higher education during the three decades after 1930 as full of paradoxes.[64] The period began with the world wide depression and then moved into a long era of active and cold war, and "both depression and war had cataclysmic effects on the universities." College attendance climbed in spite of declining birth rates in the 1920s and 1930s, the years that supplied those of college age in the 1940s and 1950s. The increases in enrollments came long before the rise in the number of births after 1940 added to the rapid increase in the 1960s. The increasing proportion of younger persons between eighteen and twenty-two entering college "was due in part to the economic value ascribed to the degree and, in part, to the failure of society to make alternative provision for this age group."[65]

By 1947 the President's Commission on Higher Education was giving voice to the view that higher education was to become the "means by which every citizen, youth and adult, is enabled and encouraged to carry his education, formal and informal, as far as his native capacities permit."[66] The environment in which the liberal arts college found itself was changing radically.

Lewis Mayhew in 1962 began his volume on The Smaller Liberal Arts College with the words, "For half a century it has been predicted that the privately supported liberal arts college would soon disappear from the American educational scene. Yet the four-year liberal arts college, rooted in American civilization, continues to exist and to educate an appreciable percentage of students seeking

higher education." He observes that, in spite of severe limitations in finances, personnel, and physical facilities," the privately supported liberal arts college attracts students and, judging by the subsequent educational and professional achievements of its graduates, does an effective job of educating a good many of them."[67]

After the optimistic note, Mayhew describes the colleges in the late 1950s and early 1960s, and refers to the predominant emphasis on general education. The general or liberal education is coupled, however, with some concern for vocational training of students, and just how far this combination should go is one of the debated issues. Therein lies the basic conflict in the college:

> Liberal arts colleges, molded to meet the demands of one period of history, have been faced with a variety of problems as they continued into the subsequent periods. Originally they provided some of the functions now performed by the public high school. Indeed some of the early colleges were scarcely distinguishable from academies or secondary schools. Their curriculums were designed to meet the needs of a relatively small number of educated men and women in a few professional fields. As American technology began to expand, as other influences on education--such as the research orientation--began to be felt, in short as American society began to change, the liberal arts colleges began to encounter serious obstacles to their further development.[68]

As the Handlins observe, one of the more dramatic problems faced by the liberal arts college was the greatly expanded student enrollments. The liberal arts college had entered a new environment, one in which universal education became more accepted and in which society demanded more and varied programs.

At one time the liberal arts colleges educated all students in the nation seeking collegiate instruction, but in the 1960s, these institutions had become "a minority group in the presence of a majority composed of other, larger and more complex types of institutions of higher learning."[69] Mayhew sees this minority status carrying with it unique problems for the liberal arts colleges. The colleges attempt to carry on the liberal tradition in the face of the vocational orientation of much of American life. They are small autonomous institutions in a world in which large centralized institutions are more and more

characteristic of American higher education. They view their smallness and independence as important to their tradition, yet the very growth in human knowledge demands acquaintance with more and more branches of knowledge, greater variety in curriculum.

Before the Carnegie Commission on Higher Education launched the more comprehensive reviews of American higher education during the 1970s, the Carnegie Corporation had in the 1960s issued a series of reports on various aspects of the American higher educational scene. One volume, authored by Morris Keeton and Conrad Hilberry, Struggle and Promise: A Future for Colleges, grew out of studies of liberal arts colleges undertaken during 1965-66 and 1966-67. The volume provides the profile of twelve colleges, two of which are set within public universities. The opening words of the volume are noteworthy, "The typical private liberal arts college of the mid-twentieth century is obsolete," and the statement is reiterated a few paragraphs later, "To repeat, the familiar free-standing, four-year liberal arts college of the mid-twentieth century is already obsolete."[70] The authors contend that a new set of institutions is emerging. Whether these new colleges will be more committed to liberal education or whether there will be more room for private initiative and diverse control patterns is not clear.

Later in the volume, the writers echo the words of half a century earlier, though spoken by Jacques Barzun in 1963: "The traditional territory of the liberal arts colleges is being threatened from two directions. The secondary schools, on one side, are invading the subject matter that used to be the province of the first two years of college, by teaching freshmen - or sophomore - level history, composition, foreign languages, literature, and mathematics. At the same time, the preparation for professions invades the college curriculum from above, introducing more and more specialized instruction."[71] When the two invaders meet, there may be no legitimate function for the liberal arts college.

While the volume points out how a number of institutions have responded

to their special challenges, it hardly supports the maintenance of the traditional single-purpose arts college. Indeed, it suggest that the liberal arts colleges move to becoming more comprehensive in nature and program.

It is precisely the move to become more comprehensive that Earl J. McGrath sees as the primary cause of the decline of the liberal arts college. He states that "the most insidious factor in the weakening of the college in recent years has been their tendency . . . to abandon . . . traditional goals by changing themselves into collections of specialized and independent departments," making them in many respects "little different from professional and graduate schools."[72] He sees in the attempt to become more like universities in emphasizing specialized curricula an adulteration of the unique purposes of the liberal arts college with the consequence of causing it to "sink qualitatively as well as quantitatively in the ranks of higher education," leading to its eclipse.[73] To his own question of whether liberal arts colleges are becoming professional schools, he answers that they are in the sense that they have tended to include more vocational education, and a growing proportion of the students appear to be electing programs advancing them toward professional goals.[74]

The beginning of the eclipse of liberal education, contends McGrath, was Charles W. Eliot's reorganization of Harvard in 1890 in which any structural difference between graduate, undergraduate or professional work was eliminated; all could be combined, whether preparatory, advanced, general or special.[75] As the university with its emphasis on graduate study grew in prestige and influence, the independent liberal arts college decreased in prestige and influence.

> The relationship which exists between graduate school and the liberal arts college is at the basis of many of the deficiencies of contemporary liberal education. The domination of the graduate schools has deprived liberal arts colleges of their intellectual heritage and of their unique teaching function. Small institutions which have rightly never aspired to university status have been forced, often with a sad wastage of their limited means, to adopt practices in direct conflict with their reasons for existence.[76]

In many respects agreeing with McGrath, but from a different perspective are

Christopher Jencks and David Riesman, who see the "academic revolution" as the rise to dominance of the university graduate and professional faculty. Their 100 "university colleges" are the models for the rest of the American colleges. More and more, undergraduate work has become the beginning of advanced graduate study as the academic guild exercises its control over the undergraduate curriculum and undergraduate colleges as well as over the graduate and professional units.[78]

It is because of the control of the guild dominated by graduate and professional orientation that Jencks and Riesman would probably see little chance for McGrath's plea for the liberal arts colleges to establish again their clear and independent mission. McGrath agrees that the "universal, compact, and clearly defined liberal arts curriculum of the mid-nineteenth century" could not be restored -- although a reader cannot help to sense that McGrath has considerable sympathy for the Yale Report of 1828. McGrath asks, instead, that the liberal arts college "regain and affirm a clear, feasible, and independent mission."[79]

The request for clearer definition of mission has become a standard prescription for nearly all colleges in their time of troubles. Such is the advice of Lewis Mayhew, and scores of others, at the beginning of the 1980s. He contends that "possibly the most significant long-run administrative problem for an institution is to develop a clear mission and image that will attract the students it wishes to serve and support it needs to survive."[80]

The Carnegie Commission sponsored a number of studies that focused on some aspect of the free-standing college. In 1969 Andrew Greeley's study From Backwater to Mainstream: A Profile of Catholic Higher Education and Dunham's Colleges of the Forgotten Americans: A Profile of State Colleges and Regional Universities appeared, both of which dealt with broader populations but included, more particularly in Greeley's study, a number of institutions of the general category of free-standing liberal arts colleges.[81] In 1971 another volume by Keeton appeared, Models and Mavericks: A Profile of Private Liberal Arts Colleges, and at the same

time Bowles and DeCosta published Between Two Worlds: A Profile of Negro Higher Education.[82] Keeton's volume in particular was addressed to the free-standing college, and most of the colleges included in the Bowles and DeCosta volume were free-standing colleges. Clark Kerr in the introduction to the Keeton volume suggests that the privately developed colleges are facing "a renaissance, for they are by nature more adaptable to new concerns of so many students, while the more massive institutions are clearly in greater trouble--some of them are turning to their own internal liberal arts colleges to respond to students concerns," but Keeton's analysis in 1971 is less encouraging than the preface would suggest. The other volume provides a thorough review of a group of colleges that faces its own special challenges in the coming years.

The following year, in 1972, Pace published Education and Evangelism: A Profile of Protestant Colleges and Astin and Lee issued The Invisible Colleges: A Profile of Small Private Colleges.[83] Both drew upon data gathered for other studies, Astin on the long term studies of college students and Pace on studies of institutions using the College and University Environment Scales.

While the Astin study includes all but two of the private colleges for black students that were in the Bowles and DeCosta study, many of the Catholic colleges described by Greeley and some of the colleges included in Pace's study, it concentrates upon what Astin refers to as the relatively little known private colleges, about one-third of all of the four-year institutions. These colleges are compared with what are characterized as the highly visible or elite colleges, certain of the state colleges and at points with the community colleges. Astin observes that the colleges are "worthy of study simply because of their large number," and because of the fact that "many of them may be in real danger of extinction."[84]

Although Astin begins with a comparison of the 494 invisible colleges with forty-four elite colleges and a middle group of 380 private colleges (neither

elite or invisible), many of the analyses are based only on forty of the invisible colleges and twenty-three elite colleges. The public college group includes some twenty-two of nearly 250 institutions. He observes that the primary concern of this group of colleges "was, and still is, survival."[85] He refers to the limitation of academic resources, the dismal position in terms of financial resources, the competition between the invisible colleges and public colleges for students. In describing the plight of the invisible college, the conclusion is that the heart of the dilemma is "confusion of the invisible college over its role and identity."[86]

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The idea of the liberal arts college has a long history. Far from being a form peculiar to the United States, it finds its origins in the endowed hospices of the medieval universities of Western Europe and England. Established initially as shelters for students pursuing advanced studies at the university, colleges evolved into primary residences and teaching institutions for the younger students being instructed in the arts sequence preparatory to entry into the advanced faculties. In France and Germany, instruction in the liberal arts later became the responsibility of classical secondary schools as the universities concentrated exclusively on advanced studies. In England, however, where strong advanced faculties in theology, law and medicine were not as fully developed and the emphasis was on the general cultural work of the arts faculty, the residential college seems to have reached the peak of influence at the time that the first North American colonial colleges were being established.

The colonial colleges took the English pattern for a model and held fast to it long after the English colleges had begun to change. Even during the early 1800s when colleges were being planted in the United States with almost reckless

abandon as the population moved westward, the old model in large part prevailed. Amid the pressures for change and adaptation, Yale College called for the maintaining of, or returning to, the historic mission of providing basic preparation in the liberal arts -- laying the foundation for a superior (higher) education. Many local colleges and specialized institutions continued to work out their own destinies, but Yale had defended and had given clearer shape to a prevailing form.

As late as the last quarter of the eighteenth century, two-thirds of the students enrolled in higher education in the United States were in liberal arts programs and most of them were in free-standing liberal arts colleges. Some colleges had evolved, however, into rudimentary universities, and private fortunes had helped create other university structures. The times had long demanded expansion beyond the basic arts curriculum. As the expansion began, institutions in the United States could have followed the lead of the impressive and much admired German universities and opted for separating the instruction in liberal education from that in the advanced studies. Or, they could work out American variations. They could build upon undergraduate programs by expanding vertically but maintaining both undergraduate and graduate units in the same institution. They could build also horizontally and vertically by changing the undergraduate sequences to include more specialized study leading into graduate work. Most universities took the third course and developed an amalgam between undergraduate liberal arts education and advanced professional study.

The free-standing liberal arts college might have found renewed strength if either of the first two options had prevailed -- separating the instruction in arts from the work of the university, or maintaining the arts curriculum intact while adding a separate graduate unit to the university. The Yale Report of 1828 marked a turning point; it had defined clearly a particular role for the liberal arts college, but by the end of the century that role seemed destined to be relegated to a bit part.[87]

The builders of the universities -- as well as the defenders of the pre-standing colleges recognized the threat the continuing university development could be to the liberal arts college. American higher education had reached a point of no return; the advanced studies of the university were required, and the development could no longer be delayed. But, because the American university became the amalgam of liberal arts college instead of a post-college specialized institution, throughout the twentieth century, insofar as the free-standing liberal arts colleges have tried to maintain their historic stance, they have been forced again and again to the defensive and have found themselves often in the position of justifying their existence.

The pressures have been building since the turn of the century, and some of the colleges have responded by opting for changed missions, expanded roles. But the move has been by a college here and a college there. Now, in the 1970s the free-standing liberal arts colleges seem to be facing a particularly critical point in their history. In 1828, and the years following, the majority of the colleges seemed prepared to follow the pattern defined by Yale, even after Yale became a University with a university college. In the 1880s, and the years following, the majority of the free-standing colleges seemed determined to retain their historic position, although some did evolve into universities and some went out of existence.[88] But, if the Carnegie Commission classification scheme can be given any credence, in the six years between 1970s and 1976 nearly 20 percent of the liberal arts colleges in the United States had become something other than what they were. A significant juncture seems to have been reached.

Richard Anderson's study of change in forty single sex and/or religious colleges over a decade (mid-1960s to mid-1970s) found evidence of significant changes in about half of the institutions.[89] He was looking at many factors other than mission, and the sample was limited to a particular subgroup within the liberal arts colleges, but the results of his study constitute other evidence of change underway.

At the University of Denver studies are underway on a broad sample of liberal arts colleges, using the 721 of 1970 as the base, to determine what kinds of changes are underway. Tentatively, five categories of institutions have been identified: (1) Those which are continuing as preparatory institutions for advanced study. The so-called stronger, or "elite", liberal arts colleges continue to be predominately single-purpose institutions. The graduates continue in large part to proceed to graduate and professional schools. There is probably an appropriate preparatory, pre-university role to be played by a limited number of such institutions.[90] (2) Those which are taking on more of the characteristics of the comprehensive college/university. Indeed, they are being classified already in the Carnegie Commission scheme as comprehensive institutions. They are truncated universities, providing some training for some few of their students who will continue their studies in the research institutions, but their greatest efforts are devoted to broadening the range of activities, offering a greater variety of vocational options to their students. (3) Those which will continue as four-year institutions, but serve essentially as community colleges in that the upper division work is limited, and the larger enrollments are in the first and second years. These colleges offer a number of pre-baccalaureate diploma and certificate programs. (4) Those institutions which serve a special clientele. These are the Bible colleges, the denominationally oriented institutions which train church workers and persons for church-related occupations as well as those interested in a type of terminal liberal arts education. (5) Those which are not likely to survive. They are becoming attached to, or incorporated into, state or public systems, becoming parts of a community college system, or going out of existence.

Actually, the division probably constitutes a two-way separation. On the one hand, there are those institutions that are reasserting or reaffirming their liberal arts stance--the first group above, and those who are accommodating in various ways the new circumstances of the 1970s and 1980s--the last four groups. The Denver

studies are not only testing the "reality" of these proposed classes, but are also examining the factors that appear to lead to reaffirmation or accommodation.

NOTES

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87. (Continued)
that it is a college and not a university degree. The universities could give the artium magister, still better, as being mne distinct from the baccalaureus, the doctor philosophial, doctor juris, doctor medicinal, doctor scientiarum naturalium, etc...." Reprinted in David N. Portman, Early Reform in American Higher Education (Chicago: Nelson-Hall Company, 1972).

88. David B. Potts suggests that in the period following 1850 the denominational college as such emerged. Prior to that period, colleges were more local creations than denominationally supported. The colleges "were essentially local enterprises. Denominational ties were of secondary importance. Even if such a position can be accepted, one would view the growth of denominational sponsorship a development in the area of legal control and not a shift away from or toward the liberal arts emphasis. See, David B. Potts, "American Colleges in the Nineteenth Century: From Localism to Denominationalism," in Education in American History, edited by Michael B. Katz (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1973).

89. Richard E. Anderson, Strategic Policy Changes at Private Colleges (New York: Teachers College Press, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1977).

90. There is probably a small group of institutions which, by virtue of selectivity or some other factor, are able to maintain a program closely related to a historic liberal arts stance. Joseph Ben-David comments upon the limited success of programs in general education in the United States. The problem in general education, and by implication in colleges oriented primarily to general (or, liberal) education, is that general (or liberal) education implies a commitment to certain values, and it is assumed that "such education created a superior person. His superiority was aesthetic ...it was also moral...finally, it was an intellectual superiority, since the cultivated mind was capable of the critical reflection and intellectual autonomy of which others were not capable." But herein lies the American dilemma, for "college education in the United States was not meant for the selected few, and was certainly not meant to be a selection process." He questions whether general (or, liberal) education can ever be an effective principle in contemporary American higher education. While the Howard Report of 1947 would disagree, Ben-David's words are worth pondering. See, Joseph Ben-David, American Higher Education: Directions Old and New (New York: McGraw-Hill Book, Co., 1972) pp. 62, 64, 67.